

REMARKS

Claims 2-11 and 13-16 are pending in this application, of which claims 2, 11, 13 and 14 have been amended and claims 15-16 are newly-added. Claims 1 and 12 have been canceled.

The Examiner has rejected the claims as follows:

1. Claims 1-7 and 11-12 under 35 USC §103(a) as being unpatentable over **Whitaker** in view of **Hoshino** (both previously applied);
2. Claims 8, 10 and 13 under 35 USC §103(a) as unpatentable over **Whitaker** in view of **Hoshino** and further in view of U.S. Patent 6,357,825 to **Bravaresco**; and
3. Claims 8-9 and 13-14 under 35 USC §103(a) as unpatentable over **Whitaker** in view of **Hoshino** and further in view of U.S. Patent 608,682 to **Jamieson**.

Applicants respectfully traverse all of these rejections.

Whitaker discloses a heavily padded chair that has a basic configuration of an ogee curve. The chair is mounted on a pair of spaced vertically disposed supports that arise from a suitable base. The aforesaid supports are so connected to the bottom of the chair that the chair may be moved from a near horizontal to a near vertical position when the controls located on one arm of the chair are operated. The controls activate an electric motor that is suitably connected to movement mechanism of the chair by means of a screw shaft.

Hoshino has been cited for teaching a curved saddle support, which **Whitaker** fails to disclose.

Bravaresco has been cited for teaching a saddle-length adjuster and a saddle-angle adjuster.

Jamieson has been cited for teaching a saddle-width adjuster and a saddle-length adjuster.

Careful review of Whitaker reveals that, because Whitaker provides neither saddle nor footrests, the legs of the user must be kept together at a narrow angle through the wide range of inclining motion of the pivoting therapeutic chair. Thus, the saddle of Hoshino, which separates the legs at some non-defined open angle, may not be combined with the chair of Whitaker to teach the present invention, in which the open angle between the user's legs is in a range of 30 degrees to 70 degrees (as recited in claim 3) and the open angle substantially corresponds to directions of flexion and extension of left and right knee joints under the condition that the user is in a sitting posture on the saddle, and places a foot on the foot position (as recited in claim 2).

Accordingly, new claim 16, depending from claim 11, and containing these limitations, has been added.

In the electrically activated therapeutic chair of Whitaker, as shown in FIGS. 1-3, the screw shaft 19 screws through the center of cylindrical member 20 and thereby the chair 23 can only swing forward and backward (column 2, lines 9-10 and 32-40).

Accordingly, even if the chair 23 is replaced with a chair 10 disclosed by Hoshino, the chair 10 can also only swing forward and backward.

Thus, Whitaker and Hoshino fail to teach the subject matter of the present invention, i.e., "a direction of the relative positional displacement between the foot position and the position of center of gravity is limited to a direction of flexion of a knee joint of the user", as recited in claim 11.

Newly-added claim 15 is supported on page 12, lines 12-15 and on page 5, line 3 of the specification of the instant application, and is not taught or suggested by any of the cited references.

Thus, all of the prior art rejections should be withdrawn and a Notice of Allowance is earnestly solicited.

The Director is hereby authorized to charge any deficiency in the fees filed, asserted to be filed or which should have been filed herewith (or with any paper hereafter filed in this application by this firm) to our Deposit Account No. 04-1105.

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Respectfully submitted,

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